What is claimed is:

1. An audio-visual system comprising:

a display capable of displaying a talking head;

an audio synthesizer unit;

a caricature filter; and

a processor arranged to control the operation of the audio-visual system,

wherein before the talking head is displayed by the display, the talking head is processed by the caricature filter.

2. The system of Claim 1, wherein the talking head is based upon image sample of a subject.

3. The system of Claim 2, wherein the caricature filter modifies the image sample to give an appearance of being at least partially synthetic as compared to an original image sample.

4. The system of Claim 3, wherein the caricature filter is selected from the group consisting of watercolor, comic, palette knife, pencil, and fresco type filters.

5. The system of Claim 1, further comprising a communication unit.

6. The system of Claim 1, further comprising a speech recognizer and a voice-to-data converter coupled to the processor.

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7. The system of Claim 6, wherein the system is a text-to-audio-visual-speech system.

8. A method for creating a talking head image for a text-to-speech synthesis application, comprising the steps of:

sampling images of a talking head;

decomposing the sampled images into segments;

rendering the talking head image from the segments; and

applying a caricature filter to the talking head image.

9. The method according to Claim 8, further comprising the step of displaying the caricaturized talking head.

10. The method according to Claim 8, wherein the applying step includes applying a watercolor filter to the talking head image.

11. The method according to Claim 8, wherein the applying step includes applying a comic filter to the talking head image.

12. The method according to Claim 8, wherein the applying step includes applying a palette knife filter to the talking head image.

13. The method according to Claim 8, wherein the applying step includes applying a pencil filter to the talking head image.

14.   The method according to Claim 8, wherein the applying step includes applying a fresco filter to the talking head image.

5   15.   An audio-visual system comprising:
        means for displaying a talking head, the talking head being initially formed using images of a subject;
        means for synthesizing audio; and
        a caricature filter that modifies an appearance of the
10   talking head before the talking head is displayed by the means for displaying, the modified talking head having at least partially an artificial appearance as compared to an unmodified talking head formed using the images of the subject.

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16.   The system of Claim 15, wherein the caricature filter is selected from the group consisting of watercolor, comic, palette knife, pencil, and fresco type filters.

20   17.   The system of Claim 15, wherein the caricature filter is selectively applied based upon user input.

18.   The system of Claim 15, wherein the caricature filter is automatically applied.

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19.   The system of Claim 16, wherein a type of filter applied may be dynamically changed by a user.

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